

The Family Resource Network, Inc.  
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Oneonta, NY 13820

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@familyrn

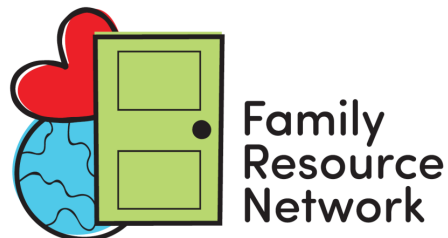


@family.resource.network

## The Family Resource Network is looking for people like YOU!

If you are reading our newsletter, it is a safe bet that you already make a positive difference in the life of someone with a special need and have attended one of the many conferences or workshops sponsored by The Family Resource Network. Have you ever wished for the opportunity to share your knowledge and/or help others? The board of directors at The Family Resource Network consists of members of our community who believe in the mission of the agency and we are currently looking for people to join our board of directors.

For more information regarding the Family Resource Network, our mission statement and the role of a board member please contact board president Rhiannon Ham at (607) 278-5758 or call the Family Resource Network at (607) 432-0001.



# connections

Information, Resources, and Updates from **The Family Resource Network, Inc.**

May & June 2025  
in this issue:

NEW: On Demand Training Option

NEW: Rural Community Connection Program and Events  
Training: Supplemental Needs Trusts and Guardianship

NEW: Rural Community Connection Program (RCCP)



The Family Resource Network is excited to introduce our newest Education Advocates, Ryan Tucker and Aimee Hadleigh. Ryan and Aimee will be working in the Family Resource Network's FSS Program, through which we serve families raising loved ones with OPWDD eligibility.

**Ryan Tucker** has been working as a Education Advocate with Family Resource Network since December. Previously, he has worked in education and taught in both middle and high schools. He and his family recently moved to the area and they live in Delhi.

**Aimee Hadleigh** is excited to be joining Family Resource Network as an Education Advocate. She has spent many years serving as a parent representative on state boards in Nevada for Early Intervention Services and with the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities. She is passionate about advocacy and enjoys working with other families to ensure their needs are being met and voices heard. She moved to New York three years ago with her husband and four children. Two of her children have special medical needs and are diagnosed on the Autism spectrum. As a family, they love to spend time outside, camping and hiking, as well as doing creative activities. Aimee is an avid knitter and loves to make wool sweaters for all her kids!

Please join us in welcoming them both to our team!



## The Family Resource Network, Inc. Mission & Purpose

### Mission Statement:

Individuals with special needs deserve every opportunity to achieve their unique potential. The Family Resource Network was founded by parents to enhance the lives of individuals with special needs and their families, empowering them to lead productive independent lives within the community.

### Purpose:

We want to make our community a better place through education and the enlisting of our citizens to bring services to those in need. We accomplish our mission through our core values.

We have been a vital part of our community for a number of years. We were founded to serve a growing segment of our community in need of inaccessible services. We have continued to grow with the help of our donors and volunteers that make our mission possible. Through all these years our purpose still remains the same: bring services to those in need.

### Family Resource Network Staff:

Harlie Dumond: Family Peer Advocate  
Mary Fralick: Family Peer Advocate  
Aimee Hadleigh: Education Advocate  
Karyn Kanzer: Family Peer Advocate  
Robin Piefer: FSS Supervisor  
Marcia Shaw: Bookkeeper  
Ryan Tucker: Education Advocate  
Kristin Winn: HR Supervisor/Program Coordinator  
Michelle Zuk: Executive Director



Find us on Facebook:  
[@familyrn](#)

Find us on Instagram:  
[@family.resource.network](#)



### G & E Therapies

Summer Camp for Youth with Autism  
After School Program for Teens with Autism-Social Skills Group (Geckos on the Go)

### Legacy Resource Fund

Source of financial assistance

### Family Resource Network Programs:

#### Services for Families with OPWDD Eligibility

Education Advocacy  
Intensive Advocacy Program  
Support Groups  
Family and Provider Trainings  
Dragon Dates Program (Social Opportunities)  
Service Access Program

#### Mental Health and Wellness Services

Family Peer Support  
Residential Family Peer Support  
Youth Peer Support  
Teen Scene  
Monthly Parent Group  
Southern Tier Chapter of Families Together in NYS

## Please join the Family Resource Network for our upcoming Workshop: Supplemental Needs Trusts and Guardianship Presented by Greg Catarella, Esq.

Friday, May 16, 2025  
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Online via Zoom

Have questions about setting up Trusts for your loved ones?  
Need advice about setting up a plan for a Guardianship?

Join us for an informational workshop presented by Greg Catarella and gain valuable information pertaining to financial planning for the future of your loved one with a disability.

Greg S. Catarella, Esq., is licensed to practice law in the State of New York. He concentrates his law practice in the areas of Elder Law, Estate Planning and Administration, Trusts, and Guardianships. For over 20 years, Greg has been helping clients and their families find peace of mind in a world that is unnecessarily complex.

### \*\*\*Registration Required\*\*\*

To register, please go to [familyrn.org](#) and click on news and events and events calendar. For questions or help registering, please contact Robin at (607)287-6358.

\*\*\*This workshop is funded through a grant from the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). Self-directing families will need to add "Training Groups" to their budgets prior to attending. Please contact Robin at 607-287-6358 for assistance adding this to your budget.\*\*\*

## **Please Join the Family Resource Network for Our Online and Phone Family Support Groups:**

At Family Resource Network, we recognize that during these difficult times, families of individuals with special needs are facing unique challenges and may feel even more isolated. While we can't meet in-person to support one another, we invite you to join us for online support groups. These will be conducted through Zoom Meetings, and families may participate online or by phone. We are offering these groups as an opportunity for families to form connections, support, and learn from each other.

***In 2025, we will be offering one online support group per month.***

**These support groups will take place on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm. Our support groups will meet on:**

**Tuesday, May 13, 2025 6:30-7:30 pm**

**Tuesday, June 10, 2025 6:30-7:30 pm**

***Registration is required.***

To register, go to [www.familyrn.org](http://www.familyrn.org) and click on "News and Events" and then "Events Calendar".

For questions, or to participate by phone, please call Robin at (607)287-6358.

\*\*\*Support Groups are funded by a grant from the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities. Self-directing families will need to add "training groups" to their budgets. Please contact Robin at (607) 287-6358 for assistance adding this program to your budget.\*\*\*

*Please join the Family Resource Network for an upcoming combined Embark Event and Caregiver Training:*

## **Noah's World and Visual Schedules**

**Saturday, June 21**

**11:00 am-1:00 pm**

**144 Roundhouse Rd., Oneonta, NY**

FRN has reserved Noah's World on Saturday, June 21, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. While the children play, parents are invited to join Robin Piefer to learn all about using visual schedules in your home. We will provide all of the material that you need to create your own visual schedule to take home.

### ***What is a visual schedule?***

Children with Autism and other developmental disabilities often have trouble transitioning from one activity to another. Visual schedules are an effective tool to help them know what to expect and reduce their refusals and meltdowns. Visual schedules can help children learn to be more independent, as well. Once your child knows how to follow their schedule, it can remind them to complete all of the steps in a routine, such as getting ready in the morning or at bedtime.

***Have fun creating a visual schedule for your child while socializing with other families! Refreshments will be provided.***

*Family Resource Network Embark is open to the families of children under 8 who are eligible to receive services through OPWDD (the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities). Please call Robin at (607)287-6358 to register for Embark.*

***Registration is required.***

To register, go to [familyrn.org](http://familyrn.org) and click on "News and Events" and "Event Calendar". For questions or assistance registering, please contact Robin at (607)287-6358.

\*\*\*This training is provided through a grant from the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. Self-directing families will need to add "Training Groups" and "Social Skills" to their budget prior to attending. Please contact Robin at (607)287-6358 for assistance adding this program to your budget.\*\*\*



## ***New in 2025!*** **On Demand Trainings**

We recognize that families are busy and can't always make it to a training at the scheduled time. In 2025, we will be offering many of our training topics on demand!

Who is eligible? If you are the parent or family member of a child or adult who is eligible for services through the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), you are eligible to request on demand trainings. If you have self-directed services, "Training Groups" must be added to your child's budget before scheduling. On demand trainings will be scheduled at a time that is convenient to you, either in-person or via Zoom. If more than one parent is interested in the same training, we will schedule it at a time that works for all interested parents.

What if you do not have a child with OPWDD eligibility? Please reach out to us for your options. We may be able to accommodate you through one of our other programs.

### **Available Training Topics:**

Understanding the NYS IEP  
Preparing for Your Child's CSE Meeting  
All About Assessments  
Services and Supports in NYS for Children with Developmental Disabilities  
Intro to Social Stories  
Intro to Visual Schedules  
Your Due Process Rights: What to do when you don't agree  
Kid, Teen and Adult in a Book  
Advocating for Your Medically Involved Child  
The Nurturing Philosophy  
Personal Power, Praise, and Positive Discipline  
Stress: Coping, Calming, and the Brain  
Helping Children Cope with Change, Grief, and Loss  
Praise, Encouragement, and Family Rules  
The Power of Play and Socialization  
Communication and Advocacy

*On Demand Trainings continued*  
*In addition to single session trainings, the Family Resource Network also has the following multisession training opportunities available through our new On Demand Training program design.*

### **Mind the Gap:**

The Mind the Gap program is for families of children ages 0-18 with a developmental disability who live in Broome, Chenango, Delaware, Otsego, Tioga or Tompkins Counties. Families will be connected to a Peer Navigator. Peer Navigators have undergone thorough training through the University of Rochester and are parents of children with special needs themselves who have experience navigating the special needs service system. This short 4-6-month program offered to families includes 12 flexible coaching sessions with a peer navigator in which parents are guided and supported as they learn and understand their child's diagnosis and get access to resources and services.



### **Nurturing Parenting: Parents & Children with Special Needs & Health Challenges**

This parenting curriculum is a 12 session program is designed to help parents and their children with chronic or life threatening medical conditions, developmental delays, life-altering disorders and disabilities add to their parenting toolboxes.



Nurturing Parenting®  
*Established 1983*

Come join the Family Resource Network's Teen Scene and Dragon Dates Programs for a Bowling Event!



Saturday, May 3, 2025  
2:00pm-4:00pm

East Main Lanes & Lounge  
1 East Main Street  
Sidney, NY

Enjoy a couple hours of fun at the Bowling Alley! Family Resource Network will pay for shoe rental and two games of bowling per family. A pizza lunch will be provided!

Please Register by May 1st

**Registration is REQUIRED.**

To register please visit our website @ [www.familyrn.org](http://www.familyrn.org) and click on "News and Events" and then "Events Calendar". To register by phone or for additional information please call FRN @ 607-432-0001

The age range for **Teen Scene** events has been expanded and Teen Scene events will be open to any school aged youth in Otsego, Delaware and Chenango County.

**Dragon Dates** events are for the families of individuals with OPWDD eligibility living in the family home in Broome, Chenango, Otsego, Delaware, Tioga or Tompkins County. Self-directing families will need to add "Social Skills" to their budgets before attending. Please contact Robin at (607)287-6358 for assistance adding this program to your budget.

***\*This is a family event. FRN is not responsible for supervision.\****

Come join the Family Resource Network's Teen Scene, Dragon Dates and RCCP Programs for a Family Picnic at Gilbert Lake!

Saturday, June 14, 2025  
12:00pm-4:00pm  
\*Event will be held rain or shine\*

Gilbert Lake State Park  
18 CCC Road  
Laurens, NY



Enjoy an afternoon with the Family Resource Network at Gilbert Lake! Gilbert Lake has a swimming beach, playground, nature trails and more for families to enjoy while visiting the park. We have reserved the beach pavilion for the day and will be providing a picnic lunch at 1pm for all registrants. In addition, there will be lawn games, scavenger hunts and a craft for families to do at their leisure. FRN will cover the cost of entrance into the park for all who register by the deadline.

Registration is required

Please Register by June 12th

To register please visit our website @ [www.familyrn.org](http://www.familyrn.org) and click on "News and Events" and then "Events Calendar". To register by phone or for additional information please call FRN @ 607-432-0001

The age range for **Teen Scene** events has been expanded and Teen Scene events will be open to any school aged youth in Otsego, Delaware and Chenango County.

**Dragon Dates** events are for the families of individuals with OPWDD eligibility living in the family home in Broome, Chenango, Otsego, Delaware, Tioga or Tompkins County. Self-directing families will need to add "Social Skills" to their budgets before attending. Please contact Robin at (607)287-6358 for assistance adding this program to your budget.

***\*This is a family event. FRN is not responsible for supervision.\****

## Rural Community Connection Program (RCCP)

The Family Resource Network is very excited to announce that we have been awarded a grant from the United Way of Mid Rural New York to provide the Rural Community Connection Program. This is a partnership between the Family Resource Network and HALo's. The purpose of the RCCP is to connect families and youth in Chenango, Delaware & Otsego Counties to support and resources that will increase the health and resiliency of our communities. We will have monthly events and look forward to helping families to make positive connections.

Please join the Family Resource Network and HALo's for our upcoming event

### Art for Wellness: Shaping How We Feel About Ourselves

Saturday, May 10, 2025

10:00am-1:00pm



HUB  
146 Main St.  
Afton, NY 13730

Please join the Rural Community Connection Program for an Art for Wellness event. Participants will be doing a variety of mental health related art projects. There will be multiple projects including a collage activity and feelings map to depict how we feel about ourselves and our emotions. We will end the event with a Positive Affirmation Poster.

Please Register by May 8th

**Registration is required**

To register please visit FRN's website @ [www.familyrn.org](http://www.familyrn.org) and click on "News and Events" and then "Events Calendar". To register by phone please call 607-432-0001 and ask for Kristin.

Families from Chenango, Delaware & Otsego Counties are eligible to attend.

The Rural Community Connection is a partnership between the Family Resource Network and HALo's. Funding has been provided by the United Way of Mid Rural New York.

***\*This is a family event. FRN and HALo's are not responsible for supervision.\****

Please join the Family Resource Network and HALo's for our upcoming event

### Art for Wellness: Feeling in the Body



Saturday, June 7, 2025

10:00am-1:00pm

HUB  
146 Main St.  
Afton, NY 13730

Please join the Rural Community Connection Program for an Art for Wellness event. Participants will be doing a variety of mental health related art projects using clay and sewing to help ourselves recognize emotions in our bodies and how to alleviate them. A pizza lunch will be provided.

Please Register by June 5th

**Registration is required**

To register please visit FRN's website @ [www.familyrn.org](http://www.familyrn.org) and click on "News and Events" and then "Events Calendar". To register by phone please call 607-432-0001 and ask for Kristin.

Families from Chenango, Delaware & Otsego Counties are eligible to attend.

The Rural Community Connection is a partnership between the Family Resource Network and HALo's. Funding has been provided by the United Way of Mid Rural New York.

***\*This is a family event. FRN and HALo's are not responsible for supervision.\****



### ***The Family Resource Network is hiring!***

All applicants should submit a resume with a cover letter to [kwinn@familyrn.org](mailto:kwinn@familyrn.org). For more information please call the Family Resource Network at 607-432-0001 and ask for Kristin.

#### **Education Advocate**

Family Resource Network is hiring a 30 hour per week Education Advocate. \$18.00 per hour (19.00 with Bachelor's Degree) plus mileage reimbursement

##### **Responsibilities will include:**

- Assisting families to navigate the Special Education system by phone, email, video-conference, and in person in the office, in family homes, and in the community.
- Advocating for families and their children at CSE and other school meetings
- Assisting families to collect documents needed to apply for services through the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)
  - Facilitating Support Groups in-person and through video-conferencing
  - Planning, advertising, and facilitating workshops and conferences for families
    - Some travel required
    - Some weekend and evening hours are required
      - Generous paid holidays and vacation
    - Must have a valid driver's license and a reliable vehicle
  - Must provide proof of vehicle registration, inspection, and insurance

##### **Qualifications:**

###### ***Minimum:***

- General understanding of the special education system
  - Strong verbal and written communication skills
- Proficient in basic features of Microsoft Windows, Word, and Excel

###### ***Preferred:***

- Personal or professional experience advocating for individuals with developmental disabilities.

###### ***Strongly preferred:***

- Bachelor's Degree
- Personal experience navigating the special education system as the parent or guardian of a child with an IEP

***Benefits: Flexible schedule with frequent opportunities to work from home, Paid time off, End of year bonus***

### ***The Family Resource Network is hiring!***

All applicants should submit a resume with a cover letter describing your personal lived experience of being a parent or guardian of a child with a social, emotional, behavioral, mental health or developmental disability to [kwinn@familyrn.org](mailto:kwinn@familyrn.org). For more information please call the Family Resource Network at 607-432-0001 and ask for Kristin.

#### **Family Peer Advocate**

Family Resource Network is hiring a 40 hour per week Family Peer Advocate \$19.00 per hour, plus mileage reimbursement.

Family Peer Advocates have 'lived-experience' as the parent (biological, foster, adoptive) or primary caregiver of a child/youth with a social, emotional, behavioral, mental health or developmental disability. They receive training to develop skills and strategies to empower other families. They foster effective parent-professional partnerships and promote the practice of family-driven and youth-guided approaches. Lived experience is extremely valuable when working with families in need of resources, support and advocacy.

##### **Applicant must:**

- Possess excellent organizational and communication skills
  - Complete progress notes in a timely manner
  - Conduct home visits with families to identify need
- Submit to a background/fingerprint check (at no cost to applicant)
- Have experience advocating within the service systems (i.e. Mental Health, Special Education, DSS, Juvenile Justice, SPOA, Foster Care)
  - Have working knowledge of Microsoft Office software

High School Diploma or Equivalent required.

***Benefits: Flexible schedule with frequent opportunities to work from home, Paid time off, End of year bonus***

